**GENERAL MEETING MINUTES OF THE**

**UPPER SHEYENNE RIVER JOINT WATER RESOURCE BOARD**

August 20th, 2025

The Upper Sheyenne River Joint Water Resource Board met on August 20th, 2025, at the Garrison Diversion, Carrington, ND.

Managers Present:

Jerry Hieb, Barnes County WRD

Julie Beckstrand, Benson County WRD

Monty Schaefer, Eddy County WRD

Tood Whitman & Ben Varnson, Nelson County WRD

Kevin Veitz, Sheridan County WRD

Julie Beckstrand, Sheridan County WRD

Tor Bergstrom, Steele County WRD

Bill Deck, Pierce County WRD

Dennis Clark, Stutsman County WRD

Others Known To Be Present:

Mandar Nangare, Barr Engineering

Tasha Krueger, Secretary, Upper Sheyenne River Joint WRB

(see sign in sheet)

**CALL TO ORDER**: Chairman Veitz called the meeting to order @ 10:33 A.M.

**ROLL CALL**: Roll call was taken with eight counties present.

Jerry Hieb, Barnes County WRD

Julie Beckstrand, Benson County WRD-Not present

Monty Schaefer, Eddy County WRD

Todd Whitman, Nelson County WRD

Bill Deck, Pierce County WRD

Kevin Veitz, Sheridan County WRD

Tor Bergstrom, Steele County WRD-Not present

Dennis Clark, Stutsman County WRD

**AGENDA REVIEW**: The agenda was reviewed. Motion to approve the agenda was made by Manager Veitz. Second by Manager Heib. Motion carried.

**MINUTES OF GENERAL AUGUST 20th, 2025**: Minutes from the General Meeting on August 20th, 2025 were reviewed. Motion to approve the Minutes of General Minutes from August 20th, 2025, was made by Manager Whitman. Second by Manager Heib. Motion carried.

**TREASURER’S REPORT**: The checkbook balance as of June 18th, 2025, was $75,090.04.

There has been income of $291,007.69; expenses of $39,528.36 and currently the checkbook balance is $320,645.51. The total funds on hand are $320,645.51. Motion to approve the Treasurer’s Report was made by Manager Deck. Second by Manager Clark. Upon Roll Call vote, Jerry Heib- Barnes County, Monty Schaefer, Eddy County WRD, Todd Whitman-Nelson County, Bill Deck-Pierce County, Kevin Vietz-Sheridan County, Dennis Clark-Stutsman County, Motion carried.

Not Present: Julie Beckstrand-Benson County and Tor Bergstrom-Steele County.

**BILLS FOR APPROVAL:** The following bills were presented for approval: Ohstad Twitchell (1835) $ 391.00, Barr Engineering (1836) $19,850.00, Garrison Diversion (1837) $30.00, Tasha Krueger (1838) $2.353.180, MNL1838) $188,939.00, Total$ 211,563.18; Motion to approve the bills was made by Manager Deck. Seconded by Manager Clark, Upon Roll Call vote, Jerry Heib- Barnes County, Monty Schaefer-Eddy County, Todd Whitman-Nelson County, Bill Deck-Pierce County, Kevin Vietz-Sheridan County, Dennis Clark-Stutsman County, Motion carried. Not Present: Julie Beckstrand-Benson County and Tor Bergstrom-Steele County.

**BY-LAWS**

At our last meeting, the Board discussed the possibility of reviewing our By-Laws and possibly updating them.  Tasha received the bylaw from the Red River Joint board.

Motion was made by Manager Heib to have Attorney Fredrickson review and create by-laws that would fit the Upper Sheyenne River Joint Board, Seconded by Manager Schaefer, Upon Roll Call vote, Jerry Heib- Barnes County, Monty Schaefer-Eddy County, Todd Whitman-Nelson County, Bill Deck-Pierce County, Kevin Vietz-Sheridan County, Dennis Clark-Stutsman County, Motion carried. Not Present: Julie Beckstrand-Benson County and Tor Bergstrom-Steele County.

**Red River Retention Authority**

Brian Fuder presented.

Save the date for Oct 1 in East Grand Forks. I have planned for the NRCS Chief Conservationist, Aubrey Bettencourt to visit the Red River Basin and I would like to extend this invitation to you.

There will be limited seating available so unfortunately, we can only accommodate you or an alternate as of now, as we get closer to the event, there may be some seats open up and I can make them available.

**LEGISLATIVE UPDATE – DANI HANSON:**

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| The North Dakota State Water Commission (SWC) today approved $17 million in cost-share funding for water development projects across the state during its meeting in Bismarck. The approved projects were related to water supply, flood protection, dam rehabilitation, and general water improvements - all expected to enhance community resilience and support sustainable water resource management.“Support for these projects is an investment in the future of North Dakota’s communities, economy, and natural resources,” said North Dakota Department of Water Resources Director Reice Haase. “By partnering with local sponsors, we have the opportunity to positively impact water development efforts in all corners of the state.”**Approved projects include:*** ND Game & Fish Dept. Baukol-Noonan Dam Rehabilitation – $250,020
* Red River Basin Commission Operations 2025–2027 – $300,000
* South Central Rural Water District Service to Napoleon – $703,110
* City of Valley City Permanent Flood Protection – $9,595,675
* Lower Heart River Water Resource District Flood Risk Reduction Project – $360,000
* Pembina County Water Resource District (WRD) Renwick Dam Safety Improvements – $330,467
* Pembina County WRD Dams Emergency Action Plans – $64,080
* Pembina County WRD Tongue River Cutoff Channel Improvements – $95,850
* Western Area Water Supply Authority Williston Regional Water Treatment Plant DeviceNET – $1,453,007
* South Central Rural Water District University of Mary Service Area Water Storage – $3,971,780

For the state-owned Northwest Area Water Supply intake and Snake Creek Pumping Plant modifications project, the SWC approved $18.9 million in federal Municipal, Rural, and Industrial Water Supply Program funding, and $2.79 million in state funding.The SWC also received updates regarding the Mouse River, Missouri River, Northwest Area Water Supply, Southwest Pipeline Project, and Devils Lake.The SWC consists of eight members appointed by the Governor, plus the Governor as chairperson. The cost-share funding approved by the SWC is almost entirely supported by North Dakota’s Resources Trust Fund, which is funded from 20.5 percent of the state’s oil extraction tax. |

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The Water Topics Committee will be meeting on September 11th, 2025. Presentations and discussion regarding the committee's studies relating to the cost threshold and formula for conducting an economic analysis for assessment drain projects, water and wetlands regulations and the taxation of inundated lands in the state, and the feasibility and desirability of creating a program allowing a farmer or rancher to complete a safety course to receive a discount on insurance relating to the individual's farming or ranching operation; receipt of required reports; and other matters related to committee directives

The Water Topics Committee will be meeting on September 18th, 2025. Discussion of the statutory duties assigned to the committee; presentations and discussion regarding the committee's studies relating to storm water project policies and funding sources, the feasibility and desirability of establishing a wastewater project fund, and the feasibility and desirability of assigning management authority for the waters of the state to the area located in the naturally occurring watershed, rather than assigning management authority based on political subdivision boundaries; receipt of required reports; and other matters related to committee directive

The Water Resource Membership are increasing from $1,000 to $2,000 in 2026. Motion was made by Manager Schaefer to approve the 2026 Membership Dues in the amount of $2,000, Seconded by Manager Whitman, Upon Roll Call vote, Jerry Heib- Barnes County, Monty Schaefer-Eddy County, Todd Whitman-Nelson County, Bill Deck-Pierce County, Kevin Vietz-Sheridan County, Dennis Clark-Stutsman County, Motion carried. Not Present: Julie Beckstrand-Benson County and Tor Bergstrom-Steele County.

**ND DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES**

Yaping Chi was unable to be presented.

Jeff Frith spoke.

Devils Lake Outlets operation updates:

* DWR reduced the discharge from the Devils Lake West End Outlet from 200 cfs to 125 cfs on August 16th due to clogging of intake screen by weeds. The West End Outlet was completely shut off for annual weed removal in the West End Outlet canal on August 18, 2025. This procedure is a routine part of each season's operation and maintenance and is expected to take 2-3 days. Currently, the discharge from the East End Outlet remains at 75 cfs. To balance water quality while the West End Outlet remains off, the East End Outlet is planned to be shut off on August 21, 2025.
* DWR remains committed to running the Devils Lake Outlets and will discharge as much water as possible given operating constraints. DWR staff will continue to monitor downstream conditions.

The following updated was read from Yaping Chi.

Department updates:

* Steve Hansen has been appointed to the State Water Commission to represent the James River Basin.  The Commission and DWR team members all thank Connie Ova for her time and leadership with the Commission.
* DWR has been filling positions, including those approved by the 2025 Legislature.
	+ Pat Fridgen was hired as the first Deputy Director of the Department of Water Resources.
	+ His previous position was filled by Dr. Duane Pool, who is the new Planning and Education Division Director.
	+ Jennifer Verleger was hired as the DWR’s new attorney.
	+ Paul Moen is the new Data and Atmospheric Resources Division Director
* DWR has a new Podcast called “From The Headwaters” that can be streamed by most of your favorite streaming services.
* The next Pre-Commission meeting has been rescheduled to September 17 instead of September 18, which is the date of the next interim Legislative Water Topics committee meeting.

**UPPER SHEYENNE PILOT PROJECT UPDATE – MANDAR NANGARE**:

Mandar reported.

There is progress on the three NRCS Sites.

Site 1 & 2

1. Eddy County-Allan Howard
2. Eddy County-Allan Howard

New Site-No name.

-Eddy County- Austin Langley

NRCS will be completing soil samples and a slope study stabilization study.

A 30% design will be completed to present to landowners. Once the landowners approved the design, the final design will be completed.

NRCS is the sponsor & have been in contact with the landowners.

The previous DEQ 319-project funds haven’t been spent. The next funding cycle will open September 1- October 31st, 2025.

Motion was made by Manager Vietz to apply for 319 Funding when the next cycle opens, Seconded by Manager Schaefer, Upon Roll Call vote, Jerry Heib- Barnes County, Monty Schaefer-Eddy County, Todd Whitman-Nelson County, Bill Deck-Pierce County, Kevin Vietz-Sheridan County, Dennis Clark-Stutsman County, Motion carried. Not Present: Julie Beckstrand-Benson County and Tor Bergstrom-Steele County.

Motion was made by Manager Schaefer to showcase the Pilot Project at the Red River Resilience NRCS event which will be held on October 1st, 2025, Seconded by Manager Clark, Upon Roll Call vote, Jerry Heib- Barnes County, Monty Schaefer-Eddy County, Todd Whitman-Nelson County, Bill Deck-Pierce County, Kevin Vietz-Sheridan County, Dennis Clark-Stutsman County, Motion carried. Not Present: Julie Beckstrand-Benson County and Tor Bergstrom-Steele County.

**US FISH & WILDLIFE**

Dave Azure wasn’t presented.

Steve Krentz has recently retired.

**Red River Water Supply**

Duane Dekray presented.

North Dakota’s relatively mild and dry winter allowed construction crews to begin pipe installation on the Red River Valley Water Supply Project (RRVWSP) earlier than previous years. The early start comes on the heels of the 2024 construction season which saw the most pipe installed to date.

Carstensen Contracting Inc. was back in the field by mid-April to continue construction of Contract 5D which includes 10 miles of pipeline and a trenchless crossing of Pipestem Creek in western Foster County and eastern Wells County. Carstensen will also begin Contract 6A this year. That contract includes the installation of a 7.1-mile transmission pipeline from the James River to Eastman Township in Foster County.

Garney Construction will work on land restoration, structure build out, hydrostatic testing, and soil haul off for Contract 5B, east of Carrington. Oscar Renda Contracting will continue working on Contract 5C this year, which includes approximately eight miles of pipeline and two major trenchless crossings east of Carrington, in Foster County.

When the RRVWSP transmission pipeline is complete, it will span from the McClusky Canal to the discharge structure, which empties into the Sheyenne River, located about six miles south of Cooperstown. The RRVWSP is projected to serve nearly half of North Dakota’s population, from the central part of the state to the eastern side of the state.

To date, 19 miles of the 125-mile buried pipeline are installed.

**Project Status
RRVWSP TRANSMISSION PIPELINE**

**CONTRACT 6A**

* **Estimated Start: Spring 2025**
* Construction of 7.1 miles of 72-inch pipeline; 2 trenchless highway crossings; 1 trenchless wetland crossing in Foster County
* Awarded to Carstensen Contracting, Inc.

**CONTRACT 5D**

* **Started: Spring 2024**
* Estimated Completion: Spring 2026
* Construction of 10 miles of 72-inch pipeline; 1 trenchless crossing in Foster & Wells Counties
* Awarded to Carstensen Contracting, Inc.

**CONTRACT 5C**

* **Started: Spring 2024**
* Estimated Completion: Spring 2026
* Construction of 8 miles of 72-inch pipeline; 3 trenchless crossings in Foster County
* Awarded to Oscar Renda Contracting

**CONTRACT 5B**

* **Started: June 2022**
* Estimated Completion: November 2023
* Construction of 9 miles of 72-inch pipeline and a trenchless crossing of the Canadian Pacific Railway in Foster County
* Awarded to Garney Construction

**CONTRACT 5A**

* **Complete**
* Construction of 1.25 miles of 72” pipeline near Carrington, trenchless crossing of US Hwy 52/281, and a trenchless crossing of the Red River Valley and Western Rail Road
* Awarded to Garney Construction

 **RRVWSP MISSOURI RIVER INTAKE PUMPING STATION WET WELL & SITE DEVELOPMENT**

* **Complete**
* Improvements to the intake site located south of Washburn adjacent to the Missouri River. Improvements will consist of site work, access road improvements, and installation of the secant piles for the wet well.
* Awarded to ICS, Inc.

**MISSOURI RIVER INTAKE, SCREEN STRUCTURE & TUNNEL**

* **Complete**
* Installation of intake screens and tunnel, located 4 Miles south of Washburn.
* Awarded to Michels Corp.

**RRVWSP SHEYENNE RIVER OUTFALL DISCHARGE STRUCTURE & SITE DEVELOPMENT**

* **Complete**
* Construction of a 3,330 sq ft concrete energy dissipation structure and flow apron, 100’ of 54” pipe, and site grading and access roads south of Cooperstown. In the future this location will be the terminus of the RRVWSP pipeline and the site will include a future control valve structure building.
* Awarded to Industrial Builders, Inc.

**COUNTY REPORTS**

Barnes – Lots of drain tile projects. Two Dams completed.

Benson- Not Present.

Eddy – Drain Tile application, Drainage Complaint

Nelson – Snagging and Clearing Project.

Pierce – Drain Tile Applications.

Sheridan – Hydrology study.

Steele – FEMA-Drain 1 outlet, drain assessments-benefits.

Stutsman – Feasibility Study completed.

**NEXT MEETING** –

Next Regular Meeting-October 15th, 2025, at 9:00 A.M, Garrison Diversion, Carrington, ND

**ADJOURNMENT** – Motion to Adjourn was made by Manager Veitz at 12:15 P.M. Seconded by Manager Clark. Chair Veitz adjourned the meeting.

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Kevin Vietz, Chair

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Tasha Krueger, Secretary